

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

Please amend the claims as follows. This listing of claims will replace all prior listings.

- 1-7. (CANCELED)
8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A tip section assembly for a rotor blade comprising:
- a structural tip spar section comprising a first surface ~~substantially parallel to a second surface, said first surface and said a second surface each extending~~ which each extend from a shear web therebetween, said structural tip spar section at least partially surrounding a first portion of a main blade spar section; and
 - a splice cap mounted to an open side of said structural tip spar section and at least partially surrounding a second portion of the main blade spar section.
9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said structural tip spar section mounts to ~~the main rotor blade spar section~~ such that an open side between said first surface and said second surface faces a leading edge of a main rotor blade.
10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 9, wherein said structural tip spar section defines an anhedral relative a main rotor blade spar.
11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 9, wherein said structural tip spar section is at least partially out of a plane defined by ~~a the main rotor blade spar section.~~
12. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, further comprising a non-structural tip skin mounted ~~to over said structural tip spar section to abut said splice cap.~~

13. (ORIGINAL) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 12, wherein said tip skin is manufactured of a three-ply fiberglass lay-up.

14. (CANCELED)

15. (ORIGINAL) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said first surface and said second surface are non-planar.

16. (ORIGINAL) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said first surface, said second surface and said shear web define a substantially C-shape in cross section.

17. (ORIGINAL) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said first surface, said second surface and said shear web define a substantially U-shape in cross section.

18. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A rotor blade assembly comprising:
a main blade spar defining a main blade spar section having at least a top surface and a bottom surface;
a structural spar section comprising a first surface and a second surface each extending from a shear web therebetween, said first and second surfaces of said structural spar section at least partially overlapping a portion of said top and bottom surfaces, respectively, of said main blade spar section; and
a splice cap mounted to an open side of said structural spar section to at least partially overlap a portion of said top and bottom surfaces of said main blade spar section such that said main blade spar section is substantially surrounded by said structural spar section and said splice cap.

19. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said structural tip spar section mounts to said main rotor blade spar section such that an

open side between said first surface and said second surface faces a leading edge of a main rotor blade.

20. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said first surface, said second surface and said shear web define a substantially C-shape in cross section.

21. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said first surface, said second surface and said shear web ~~define a substantially U-shape in cross section~~ follow an outer contour of said main blade spar section.

22. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said structural spar section includes a structural tip spar section.

23. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said first portion and said second portion are defined generally along a longitudinal length of the main rotor blade spar.

24. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein the first portion includes a trailing edge of the main rotor blade spar.

25. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 24, wherein the second portion includes a leading edge of the main rotor blade spar.

26. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said structural tip spar section is mountable around the first portion of the main blade spar section.

27. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, wherein said structural tip spar section and said splice cap substantially surround the main blade spar section.

28. (NEW) The tip section assembly as recited in claim 8, further comprising a non-structural tip skin mounted over said tip spar section and under a portion of said splice cap such that said splice cap overlays a forward edge of said non-structural tip skin.

29. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said splice cap extends along a leading edge of both a tip section and an intermediate section of the main rotor blade assembly.

30. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said structural tip spar section and said splice cap surround said main blade spar.

31. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 18, wherein said structural spar section is bonded to said main blade spar.

32. (NEW) A rotor blade assembly comprising:
an upper non-structural skin;
a lower non-structural skin;
a main blade spar located between said upper and lower non-structural skins, said main blade spar including a main blade spar section defining a main blade spar longitudinal axis;
a structural spar section comprising a first surface and a second surface each extending from a shear web therebetween, said structural spar section at least partially surrounding an aft portion of said main blade spar section;
and
a splice cap mounted to an open side of said structural spar section, said tip cap at least partially surrounding a leading edge portion of said main blade spar section such that said main blade spar section is substantially surrounded by said structural spar section and said splice cap.
33. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 32, wherein said main blade spar is a generally tubular member in lateral cross-section.
34. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 32, wherein said structural spar section is a structural tip spar section which defines a tip spar longitudinal axis transverse to said main blade spar longitudinal axis.
35. (NEW) The rotor blade assembly as recited in claim 32, wherein said splice cap is mounted to said open side of said structural spar section to generally follow said main blade spar longitudinal axis.